

Office of Fair Trading

Steps for safe viewing of a solar eclipse

A solar eclipse occurs when the Moon fully or partially blocks the Sun as it passes between the Sun and the Earth.

On 14 November 2012, parts of Queensland will experience a total solar eclipse.

The following are tips for viewing this rare phenomenon safely.

1. Never look directly at the Sun without proper eye protection. It is possible to suffer serious and permanent eye damage by looking at a solar eclipse the wrong way, even for a very short time.
2. Always use solar eclipse glasses, or filters that have been made specifically to attach to hand-held glasses, telescopes or binoculars for safe solar eclipse viewing.
3. Look for filters that have been appropriately certified against the European Standard for personal eye equipment (EN 1836:2005+A1:2007) or the Australian Standard for welding shields and goggles with a lens category higher than 12 (AS/NZS 1338.2:1992 & AS/NZS 1338.1:1992).
4. Before using solar eclipse glasses or filters, check to see if they are scratched or damaged. If so, do not use them as they will not fully protect your eyes.
5. Do not use solar eclipse glasses or filters that do not show compliance with the Standards listed above – they may do you more harm than good.
6. Do not look directly through binoculars, telescopes or camera optical viewfinders. It is not safe to use regular sunglasses, exposed film or x-ray film to view a solar eclipse.
7. Alternative safe viewing methods include using pinhole, binocular or telescope projection. Visit <http://sunearthday.nasa.gov/2012/transit/viewing.php> for details on how to do this safely. For information on filters for telescopes or binoculars visit <http://eclipse.gsfc.nasa.gov/SEhelp/safety2.html>.

